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Quote, Unquote

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"As long as there was a supervisory relationship, the prohibition was necessary. We're not here to interfere in people's lives."

An official at the University of Iowa, on its policy covering sex between professors and students: A8

"Disagreement is what archaeology is all about."

A South African researcher who has found evidence of 77,000-year-old artwork: A13

"Distance education is a very hard sell at black institutions . . . There was a time when we just couldn't think about technology in the classroom. We had to think about reading and writing."

The director of distance education at Morgan State University: A27

"With chalk, I'm not naive. Part of the reason that we're very liberal about this is that we can't control it."

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"When people say what they're looking for is leadership, 'aggressive' could be too strong a word. But it might be the appropriate word."

The head of the committee searching for a new president of the National Collegiate Athletic Association: A33

"We cherish our great heritage and our great culture, and rightly so. But we have lost its great tolerance and openness. We teach science, but we still have taboos."

An advocate for higher-education reform in the Arab world: A35

"We have nothing to lose—and much to gain—by trying to return to the days when presidential searches were something other than political campaigns, when at least a few 'mavericks' with imagination and powerful intellects rose to the top."

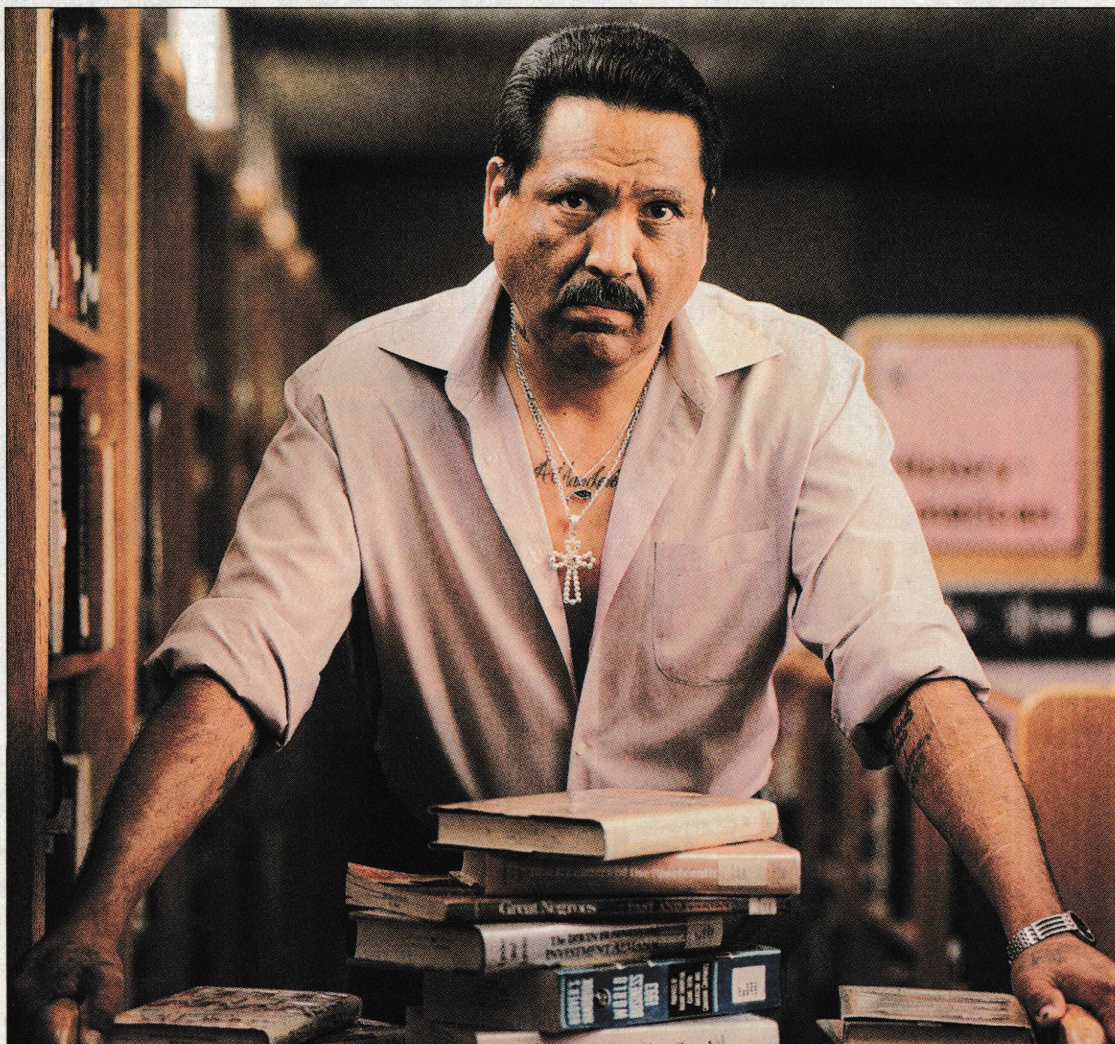
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RESEARCH

TIME BANDIT: Call it Schmidt's Law of Idealism: Physicists believe their institutions should rise above the corporate ethos that dominates industry.

That's how **Jeff Schmidt**, a former editor at *Physics Today*, explains the wave of protest from physicists angry that the magazine fired him after 19 years for stating in his recent book that he had written it on time stolen from work (*The Chronicle*, June 9, 2000).

More than 500 physicists signed a letter in January calling on the American Institute of Physics, which publishes *Physics Today*, to reinstate Mr. Schmidt—who says he consistently received positive job evaluations. Many of them are fans of his book, *Disciplined Minds: A Critical Look at Salaried Professionals and the Soul-Battering System that Shapes their Lives* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), which criticizes corporate and university management. “It has changed how I view the university and how I teach and interact with my students,” says Denis G. Rancourt, a physics professor at the University of Ottawa.

Suggesting in their letter to the institute's executive director, **Marc H. Brodsky**, that Mr. Schmidt had been fired for the political content of his book, the physicists wrote that “free debate within the physics community is healthy. We expect you to encourage it, not stifle it.”

“We decided on the protest when all other avenues were exhausted,” says **Talat Rahman**, a physics professor at Kansas State University. “The size of the protest has surprised us all.” She sees the magazine's failure to reply to the letter, or to print it, as further suppression of free speech. “*Physics Today* is supposed to be a forum for physicists, and it has certainly never before received a letter with that many signatures. We see AIP's treatment of the letter as an example of the same lack of enthusiasm for free expression that led AIP to fire Jeff.”

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Hot Type

suppression of free expression,” says Mr. Brodsky. “Any employer would be reluctant to have someone on the premises who says he's stealing.” Could Mr. Schmidt's statement that he wrote his book on “stolen time” have been a mere rhetorical flourish? “Even if it was, it's not good for the morale of other employees,” says Mr. Brodsky. “Time is a rare commodity.” Mr. Schmidt's years of lobbying for a more racially diverse editorial staff, says Mr. Brodsky, had “nothing to do with the decision.”

Responding to the many dozens of other scientists who wrote to him independently seeking an explanation, Mr. Brodsky has pointed out that “no agency has found that AIP violated any law.” Not good enough, many shot back. “The action was legal, but not fair,” says Kristina Lerman, a computer scientist at the University of Southern California.

Would Mr. Schmidt want to work at *Physics Today* again, at this point? “I would take the job back at least briefly, as a symbolic thing,” he says. “Also, I need the money.” But, he says, the “image adjustment” that the American Institute of Physics is undergoing “is a form of justice itself.” He says he has no regrets about introducing his book with the line that it was written “on stolen time.”

“I wish they hadn't deliberately misinterpreted that, but if you censor yourself when you're writing a book, then what is the value of the First Amendment? These people must have arrest records for shoplifting [Abbie Hoffman's *Steal This Book*].”

TALKING TURKEY: Sure, you turn to **Yale University Press** for books about communism,

Chinese civilization, or intellectual history. But for information about the Tennessee Fainting goat, the Dominique hen, and the four-horned Jacob sheep?

Why not? One of Yale's newest books is *The Encyclopedia of Historic and Endangered Livestock and Poultry Breeds*, by a middle-school librarian, **Janet Vorwald Dohner**.

Jean E. Thomson Black, Yale's senior editor for science and medicine, is the first to acknowledge that the encyclopedia is “an unusual project” for Yale, but she sees it as a logical extension of her bigger mission at the press: to expand the environmental-history list and reach readers beyond academe.

The encyclopedia is not just for the 4-H club, though. Ms. Dohner, who raises rare breeds of chickens, horses, goats, and herd dogs on her farm in Michigan as a hobby, hopes other readers will see that biodiversity among farm animals is just as important as the biodiversity of wildlife.

“Since the 1950s, with the move toward industrialized agriculture, and even more in the past 20 years as food companies have internationalized, they want uniformity. So animals are highly hybridized and very strictly bred,” she says. The result: turkeys too heavy to support their own weight and cows who can't eat grass. Even the research herds and flocks that land-grant colleges regularly kept are dwindling.

The loss is more than aesthetic and cultural, Ms. Dohner says.

“A disease could wipe out all these stocks that are closely related,” she warns. Many gene combinations—which could have untold medical uses—are in danger of disappearing. She urges people who don't own animals to make a difference by supporting rare-breeds-conservation groups and buying from local farmers. “You never know what you might need.”

—JENNIFER K. RUARK

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someone of Mr. Appiah's hybrid, transnational, and privileged background, is it perhaps less of a leap to theorize race out of existence than it might be for someone raised in a less ambiguous context, one in which the color line is a defining social force? Mr. Appiah points out that in those parts of Africa in which everyone is black, race is not the organizing principle of people's lives; instead, things like social class, gender, urban versus rural, and tribal affiliation are what divide people. Some wonder, however, what it would mean to say that race doesn't exist in, say, rural Mississippi or segregated Chicago.

Kenneth W. Warren, a professor of English and humanities at the University of Chicago and the author of *Black and White Strangers* (University of Chicago Press, 1993), thinks those critics have it wrong. He says that while such social realities are enormously significant, they do not contradict Mr. Appiah's argument that race has no objective reality. To enumerate the sociological vicissitudes of race, he says, demonstrates the various ways in which it is constructed, but lends no credence to the idea that there are intrinsic racial properties or essences.

Other scholars agree, and they praise Mr. Appiah's work. Orlando Patterson, a professor of sociology at Harvard and the author of *The Ordeal of Integration* (Civitas/Counterpoint, 1998), hailed *In My Father's House* as “a major intellectual event” and a “desperately needed antidote” to the “resurgent chauvinism” that “threatens to replace clear, hard thinking about the condition of black peoples in Africa and the Americas.”

The timing of *In My Father's House* gave it an acute poignancy, says Robin D.G. Kelley, a professor of history and Africana studies at New York University and the author of *Race Rebels* (Free Press, 1994). With multiculturalism at its zenith in the early 1990s, Mr. Appiah “contested multiculturalism's racial and ethnic notion of identity,” which Mr. Kelley calls a “zoological” approach (blacks in this cage, Latinos in that one, South Asians in another).

Mr. Kelley tells a story about Mr. Appiah's own identity. The two were having lunch at an Indian restaurant one afternoon. When Mr. Appiah asked the waitress about a dessert on the menu, she reacted with annoyed incredulity. “You know,” she said impatiently, taking Mr. Appiah, on the basis of his appearance, to be Indian, and assuming

his question to be an attempt to pass as non-Indian. “He was living out some of the complications of his own argument,” says Mr. Kelley. Mr. Appiah did not correct her.

A ROOTED COSMOPOLITAN

That sense of identity as fluid, as complex, as syncretic, is fundamental to Mr. Appiah's intellectual project. But while one thrust of his work is to challenge received notions of identity, he affirms an identity that is not just cosmopolitan and universal but rooted and particular. He aims therefore, to avoid the “twin pitfalls of parochialism and false universality.” A tricky balancing act, indeed.

He says he has tried to follow his father's example. In an essay titled “Cosmopolitan Patriots,” he talks about his father's simultaneous love for Ghana, his commitment to a nonchauvinist Pan-Africanism, his Christian humanism, and his internationalism. In a letter to his children Mr. Appiah's father exhorted them to “remember that you are citizens of the world.”

Mr. Appiah's move from Harvard to Princeton isn't the only recent change in his life: After 20 years in the United States, the citizen of the world recently became a U.S. citizen, so that he could finally vote.

His work, too, will take a more political

turn, focusing less on racial identity and more on identity's ethical and political dimensions. “I have spent 20 years thinking about race as a form of identity, and it is only one case,” he says, “a misleading model for some other cases” of identity. He plans to explore how identity matters for ethical and political life—when liberal democracies, for example, should think of their citizens “as women and men, as members of identity groups, as mere individuals, and the like.”

Princeton, he says, is “the perfect place” for him to teach. He will split his time between the multidisciplinary Center for Human Values and the philosophy department, widely regarded as one of the top analytic departments in the country. (He also hopes to do more fiction writing. His mystery novels—he's published three—are far from highbrow, he says, though one of them does feature a Wittgenstein scholar at Cambridge.)

For all of his intellectual accomplishments and his passion for the life of the mind, Mr. Appiah believes there is a vital need to do more than just theorize and argue. “We cannot change the world,” he writes, “simply by evidence and reasoning.”

And yet, he adds, “we can surely not change it without them, either.” ■

HOT TYPE

Physicists Unite in Defense of Time-Pilfering Editor

By JENNIFER K. RUARK

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